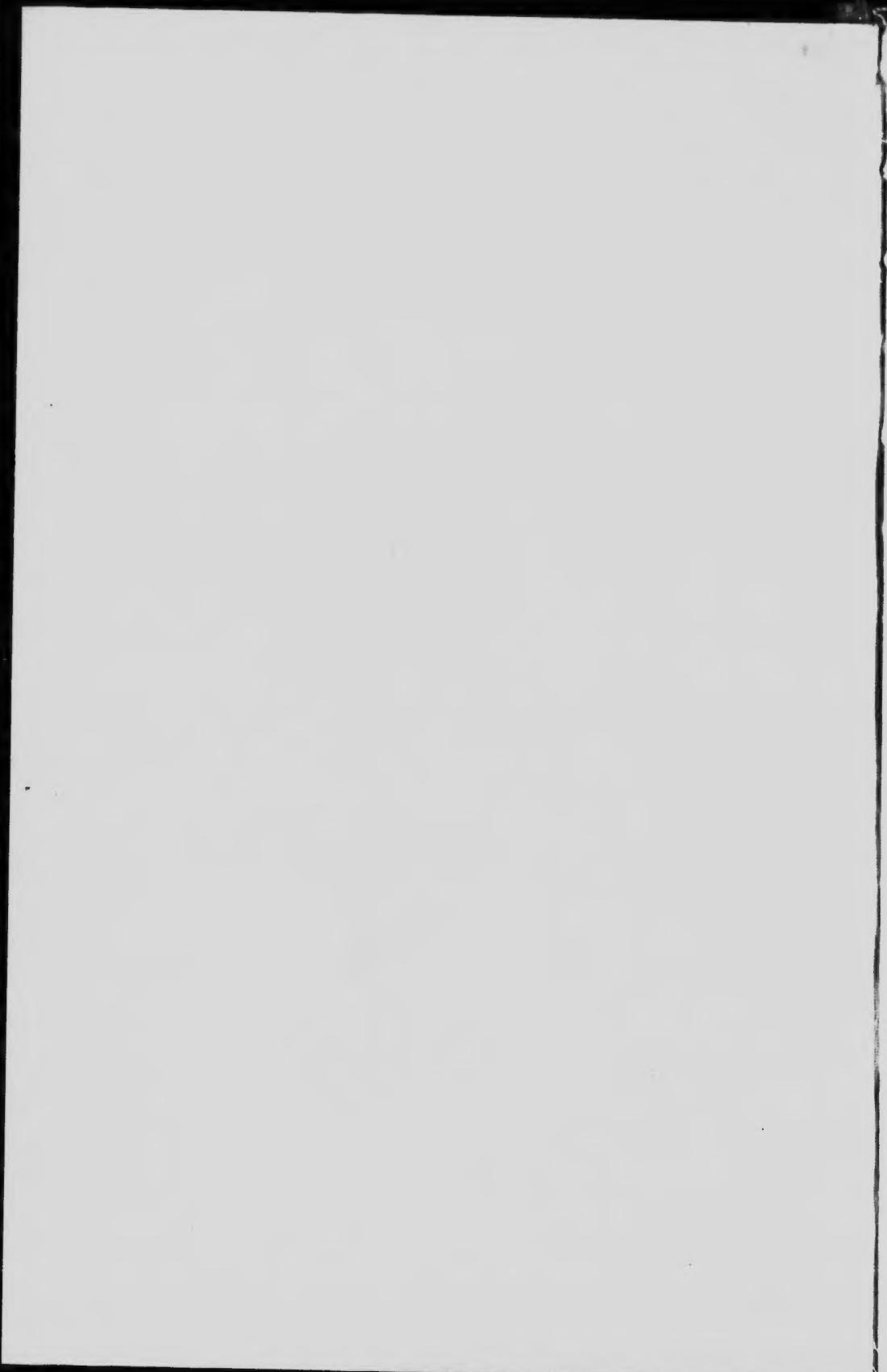


# **ONTARIO TEMPERANCE ACT**

**Speech Delivered by**

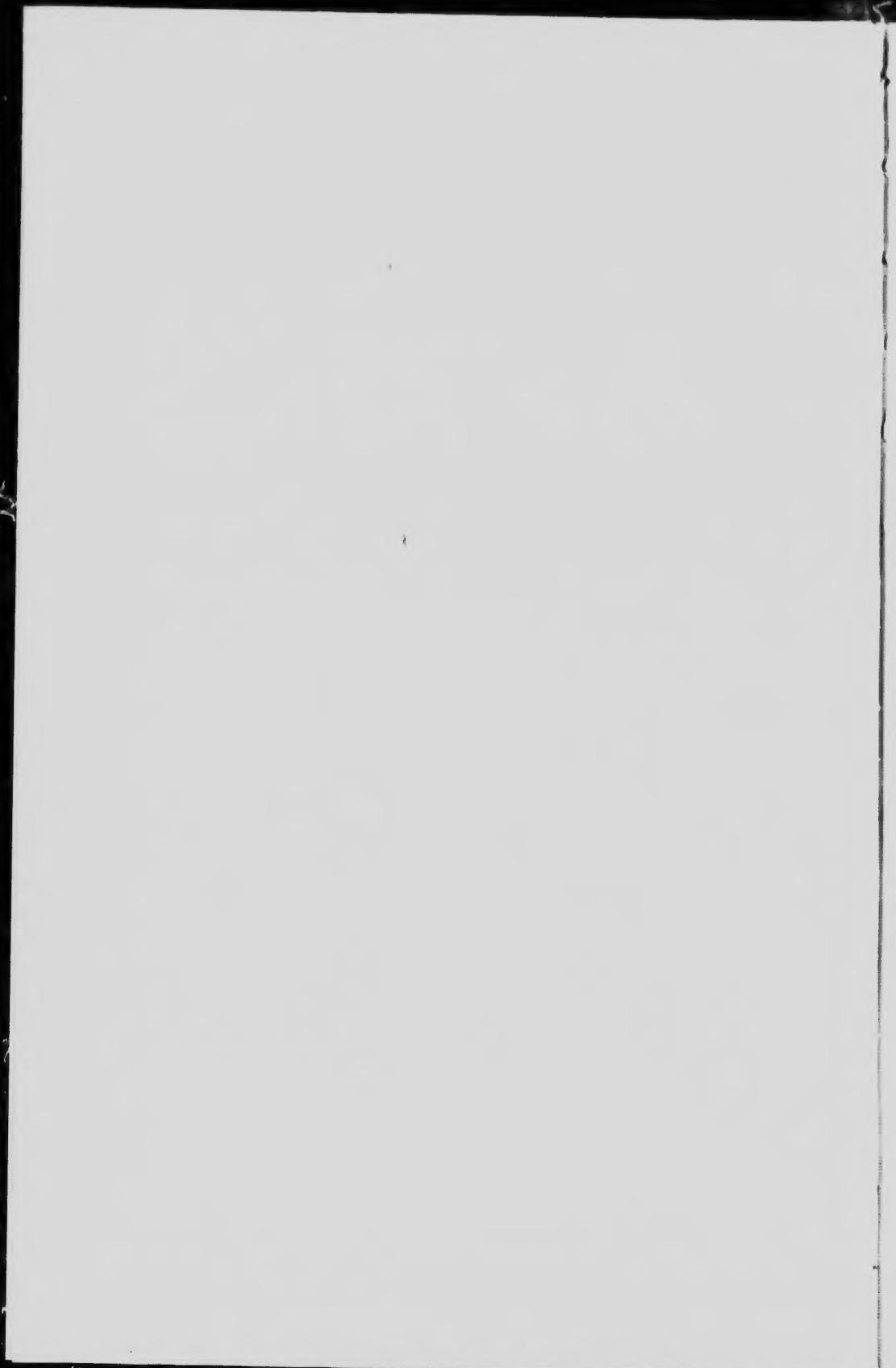
**HON. W. H. HEARST**  
**PRIME MINISTER**

**April 4, 1916**





**HONOURABLE WILLIAM HOWARD HEARST**  
**PRIME MINISTER OF ONTARIO**



# ONTARIO TEMPERANCE ACT

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**Speech delivered by Hon. W. H. Hearst,  
Prime Minister, on the second reading  
of the Ontario Temperance Act in the  
Ontario Legislature, April 4, 1916.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** I do not propose to speak at any great length at the present time on the details of the Bill before the House. There will be ample opportunity for that in Committee, and to receive suggestions honourable gentlemen may see fit to make. Any attempt to discuss details at this stage would be liable to lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

The main principle of the Bill, and the reasons that prompted the Government to introduce it, were dealt with in a general way in my remarks on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and have been fully dealt with by the Honourable the Provincial Secretary on the first reading of the Bill, as well as in his address this afternoon in moving the second reading.

The measure is such an important and far-reaching one, however, that I ask the House to bear with me while I make a few observations on the general principles involved, and the reasons that have actuated the Government in presenting this legislation to the House at the present time.

**Temperance Sentiment Supreme**

In speaking on this subject on the occasion referred to I had this to say:

"Not that there has been any real dispute or difference inside of this House or outside of it as to the great and very great evils of intemperance. Conservatives and Liberals, teetotalers, and those

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who are not teetotalers, prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists all agree as to the evils arising from the excessive use of alcohol, and while we are proud of the sober, moral and religious character of the people of Ontario, a people in habits, spirit and high ideals not, I believe excelled anywhere in the world, yet no one can gainsay the fact that even here the bad influence of the excessive use of alcohol is to be found on almost every hand. In nearly every graveyard the grass grows green over the graves of men—the brightest and best in the community—whose lives were shortened, and whose services to their country were impaired through the evils of intemperance. There is scarcely a city, town or hamlet in which saddened homes and heartbroken women may not be found as a consequence of this evil, so that there is not now, nor has there ever been, room for difference of opinion as to the evil effects of intemperance, or as to the fact that these evils exist in this Province, although happily to a much lesser degree than in most places in the world. The only difference of opinion has been as to the best method to adopt, the best laws to enact and the best course to take for the purpose of limiting these evils as much as possible and removing temptation, so far as that may be practicable, from the weak and youth of our land." (Applause.)

I content myself this afternoon with simply reaffirming these sentiments so far as a discussion of the evils of intemperance is concerned. I propose to deal rather with the economic aspect of the question and the necessity as a war measure for drastic action with regard to it.

### Convincing Evidence

If I felt it necessary in this House to make a case against the evils at which this Bill is aimed I would only have to refer to the statements of leaders of the medical profession in this Province at a meeting held a few days ago, when the use of alcohol as a beverage was condemned by every speaker in unmeasured terms. Not only that, but it was affirmed that alcohol had very little place in medicine, even as a drug. Major Dr. McCullough, Secretary of Provincial Board of Health, who has made for himself a national reputation on matters pertaining to Health and Sanitation had this to say:

"The public should learn from us that there is mighty little, if any place for alcohol in medicine. They should learn that alcohol is a poison in the same class with opium, cocaine, and other deadly drugs, and that the drunkard is no more a criminal than the morphine

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user. . . . The money annually wasted in alcohol would pay the public health bills of a continent over and over again." He said that while prohibition would not completely stop the evil, it was the duty of the doctors to educate the people against the drink evil, as they more than any others know the effects and evils of alcohol. He said that venereal diseases were often the indirect result of alcohol. "Many a youth contracts the syphilis which ultimately cuts off his life or his reason in his first spree. Alcohol and sexual vice go hand in hand."

Dr. McPhedran, a leader in the profession, said:

"There is some difference of opinion among doctors as to the immediate effects of alcohol on the mind and body, but none as to its ultimate disastrous effects. No one would welcome the doing away with alcohol more than I would. I would be devoutly thankful if prohibition would do away with its use as a beverage."

As a doctor he thought the regular moderate use of alcohol should not be encouraged. He found that alcohol was scarcely ever used in doctors' homes in later years. He further stated that there was no doubt that prostitution was chargeable to drink and that this evil was becoming a positive menace to the country.

Dr. Gilmour, Superintendent of the Ontario Reformatory at Guelph, said:

He had never known a single case of wife murder that was not committed under the influence of liquor. Alcohol developed a dual personality in man. Men who were kindly disposed in prison, when they got out were diabolical when they could secure the drug.

I have, however, no intention of following that aspect of the subject. To repeat and emphasize the evils of intemperance is but to take up time unnecessarily in stating what no one will deny. I have quoted the opinions of the medical men to whom I have referred simply because they are so sweeping in character and recent in date, and show the ever-increasing trend of scientific public opinion against the use of alcohol.

But it is not enough to justify the legislation before the House that all admit and none deny the terrible evil that follows the liquor traffic. There must be some ground for the belief and hope that the legislation proposed will at least to some degree minimize these evils and it is on this phase of the subject that we find the gravest divergence of opinion.

### Remove Temptation

That this Bill will do away with all, or nearly all the evils of intemperance no reasonable man will pretend. So long as liquor is produced and can be procured, so long will men drink it and drink it to excess. But I believe that not only will the Bill before the House largely reduce temptation to the rising generation of our land, and produce a more sober citizenship in the future, but that it will be a blessing to thousands in our Province to-day who are battling manfully against their appetites for strong drink, but are unable to withstand the temptation now openly presented for the purchase of strong drink, while tens of thousands more who drink in moderation, will rejoice at the fact that no opportunity or temptation longer remains to waste time, money, energy and efficiency, drinking liquor in hotels, in clubs and elsewhere.

Notwithstanding all this, the Bill before the House would not now be before this House, at any rate in its present shape, but for the war. The war has not only changed, at least for the time being, the sentiments of the people on this question, but it has imposed obligations and emphasized the duty of economy and efficiency that did not exist before. (Hear, hear). My contention is that if the Bill would bring no benefit to the Province from a moral standpoint, if the results that follow its enactment would add nothing to the health and happiness of our people, as a war measure, for the purpose of aiding economy, thrift and efficiency, it is justified—it is made possible—yea, it is demanded—by public opinion. (Applause.)

And it is on that basis I urge the passage of the Bill in its present form, and it is on that basis I will deal with it in the further remarks I desire to make. I want to state frankly and clearly to the House and the country that I would not think of urging the passage of this Bill through the House without a vote of the people, but for the war and the obligations imposed thereby.

### People Must Decide

I am of the opinion, and strongly of the opinion, that this question should be eventually decided by the direct vote of the electors of the Province by means of a referendum. In a democratic country like this public opinion is the last supreme arbitrament on every question, and it seems to me a question of this kind so closely affecting the people is peculiarly one in which public opinion should have an opportunity of expressing itself in the ballot box as freely and as untrammeled as possible. (Applause). The principle of submitting this question to the direct vote of the electors has been admitted for years in this House, as well as in the Federal House, and recognized by the two political parties also in connection with the local option law of Ontario and the Canada Temperance Act.

What is proposed in this direction is neither new nor different in principle from what has existed for years in connection with the measures I have just mentioned. We simply propose in this connection to extend the well-recognized principle, to which I have referred, to the whole of the Province. In addition to this, I think by all means the best course in the interest of advanced temperance legislation is to have the subject submitted to the people for their calm and deliberate judgment, apart entirely from politics, apart so far as possible from everything calculated to disturb the mature and deliberate conviction of the voter as to what is right and best for this Province. The man, who with the full knowledge of all that is involved and the undoubted difficulties surrounding temperance legislation solemnly and directly by his vote in the sacred precincts of the polling booth enacts such a law, pledges and consecrates himself to the carrying out of that law so far as possible. It is his own deliberate act and he is in duty bound to back up that act; and if he is an honest man he will back it up. It

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will make the voter feel his responsibility on this matter better than in any other way. (Hear, hear.)

**Eliminate Political Strife**

Surely if it is justifiable to submit any question to the direct vote of the people, it is a social and moral question such as this which comes home so closely to everyone of us and affects so much the lives, comfort, and happiness of our people. Surely if there ever was a question that should be removed as far as possible from the strife of party politics and upon which temperance people should be united, untrammelled and unprejudiced, it is a question of this kind, the success of which depends so largely upon public opinion and the co-operation of the people in making it a success.

**Our policy in 1914, and before and since, has been that this question should be removed as far as possible from the arena of party politics and from partisan controversy, and the method we are submitting to this House for the final settlement of this question by means of a referendum provides the only way in which that policy can be effectually carried out. (Applause.)**

In the provision for submitting this question to the people there is no thought or desire on the part of the Government of evading the responsibility that properly belongs to a Government in a matter of this kind. That responsibility we cannot evade. That responsibility we have no desire to evade; we shall discharge it to the full limit of our capacity. (Applause.)

**Soldiers Entitled To Say**

I would have much preferred to have had a vote of the electors on the matter before taking any action had that course been possible. I think it would have been

more advisable from every standpoint, but from the first I was determined that when a vote was taken all the electors should have a free and equal opportunity of expressing their views in the ballot box, and that, above all, our brave soldier boys who are fighting in the trenches would be given the same opportunity as those who remain at home to express by the ballot their wish on such a momentous question. (Applause.) On investigation and enquiry from the military authorities I found that it would not be practicable to secure by any means a full vote of the soldiers, and for that reason I decided that no vote should be taken now. To me, however, the call for action and for action now, came clearly and I determined to answer that call.

### Public Opinion Strong

The claim that this Government has no mandate to pass even a temporary prohibitory measure is met by the fact, which is conceded by everyone, that if a vote were now taken it would be overwhelmingly in favour of the measure proposed. This is conceded by those opposed to the Bill and by representatives of the liquor trade themselves as freely as it is claimed by the temperance workers; and prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists seem equally opposed to a vote at the present time. In addition to this, there are, of course, the very strong arguments against the expenditure of any money that can be avoided, both by the Government and by the people under present conditions, and the stronger argument still that so far as possible nothing should be now introduced that would cause a division among our people or disturb the harmony that should exist among all classes in working together.

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**for the end that prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists alike have in view, the bringing of the present war to a successful conclusion at the earliest possible moment. (Hear, hear.)**

The Government, therefore, has decided, as provided by the Bill, to bring the Act into force without the direct vote of the people. But after a period of about three years when the people have had an opportunity of judging as to the efficacy or the failure of the Act as a temperance measure, when we hope that the war will be over and our soldiers back from the front and conditions generally have assumed their normal character, then the people of the Province will have an opportunity by their free vote to decide this question for themselves. If the war should unfortunately not be over by the time named, the vote will be deferred for a reasonable time after the war.

**Splendid Conservative Record**

It has been said by some that the Government's policy on this subject is contrary to the tenets of the great Conservative Party, who have ever guarded jealously the liberties of the subject. But if you will go back to 1884 under a Conservative Government in the House of Commons, you will find the following resolution moved by one, prominent then and now, in the Conservative Party, and carried by a very large majority, and in that majority were included the votes of Sir John Macdonald and his Ministers.

"That the object of good government is to promote the general welfare of the people by a careful encouragement and protection of whatever makes for the public good, and by an equally careful discouragement and suppression of whatever tends to the public disadvantage.

"That the traffic in alcoholic liquors as beverages is productive of serious injury to the moral, social and industrial welfare of the people of Canada.

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"That despite all preceding legislation, the evils of intemperance remain so vast in magnitude, so wide in extent and so destructive in effect as to constitute a social peril and a national menace.

"That this House is of the opinion, for the reasons hereinbefore set forth, that the right and most effectual legislative remedy for these evils is to be found in the enactment and enforcement of a law prohibiting the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes, and this House is prepared, so soon as public opinion will efficiently sustain stringent measures, to promote such legislation, so far as the same is within the competency of the Parliament of Canada."

And again in the year 1889 still under a Conservative Government, the following resolution was carried:

"That in the opinion of this House it is expedient to prohibit the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquors, except for sacramental, medicinal, scientific and mechanical purposes, when the public sentiment of the country is ripe for the reception and enforcement of such a measure of prohibition."

And we find the great leader of the Conservative Party in Canada, a man whose name will go down through all the ages as the one who perhaps had the most to do in laying broad and well the foundation of the Confederation of Canada, voting for this measure.

Only the other day we heard in the House of Commons at Ottawa one of the leading members of the party, Mr. Bennett, when introducing the Government's resolution on this question, as outspoken in favour of prohibition in principle as anyone could be, arguing with signal force and ability that the question was one for the people to decide and one in which the minority must bow to the majority, and admitting that public opinion was overwhelmingly in favor of prohibition. And this seemed to be, with but few exceptions, practically the unanimous view of the House.

**Sir James Whitney's Position**

Then come to the policy of the Conservative Party in this House. The policy has been clear and distinct that we would legislate to minimize the evil effect of the liquor

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traffic as fast as circumstances and public opinion would warrant. Those who sat year after year in this House with the late Prime Minister know how often he affirmed and re-affirmed that position. (Hear, hear.) But as some have said that our position to-day is a reversal of our former attitude I ask the indulgence of the House while I quote some of the many public statements on this point made by the late lamented Prime Minister of this Province. In speaking to the Canadian Temperance League at Massey Hall, on October 31, 1909, Sir James Whitney, said:

"So I say to you frankly, I am prepared to join in every reasonable movement which is shown to me to have for its object the minimizing and ultimate doing away with the evils of the drink habit. And having said that, let me add, with the earnestness of one who has seen and known, that if the time comes when the most ardent advocates of doing away with everything associated with the liquor evil will join hands with those of his fellows—perhaps some of them not even total abstainers—who are prepared to do at least something to lessen it, a coalition will be formed which will enable the cause of temperance to make more progress in one year than was ever dreamed possible."

And again at St. Paul's Methodist Church, Toronto, on October 14, 1912, he said:

"I will be glad on any other occasion to help along even a little the cause you have at heart. The public man who is unwilling to do all in his power to suppress the evils of the liquor traffic is unworthy of the support of any British community."

I believe the opportunity has come to me at the present time by this Bill to do something, and to do an important thing, towards the suppression of the drink evil, and if I were unwilling to take the step I would be, as the late statesman well said, "unworthy of the support of any "British community."

In Sir James Whitney's manifesto to the people in the campaign of 1914 he used this language:

"We believe that the people should be trusted to decide this matter for themselves, and that the dragging of the temperance question into the arena of party politics is not in the best interests of the cause. We believe, moreover, that a policy that keeps shops open while closing the bars will have a tendency to encourage and increase

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the sale of liquor in large quantities and the consumption of it in the home. That policy we leave to our opponents. We shall continue our efforts to minimize as far as possible the evils resulting from the liquor traffic and the drink habit."

**"We Have Kept The Faith"**

enc.

And if it <sup>is</sup> his last final message to the people of Ontario, in his great speech on June 23, 1914, in Massey Hall, he said:

**"We have kept the faith and I promise as we have always promised, I promise now for the fourth or fifth time that this question shall never be let out of our sight, and that from time to time as opportunity arises we will be watchful and seize those opportunities and go further in the direction of minimizing the evils of the liquor traffic."** (Applause.)

No such opportunity as we have to-day, no such call for action as comes to us to-day, could have been in the mind of the late statesman when he made that speech. There was no more important utterance in the speech than the sentence I have quoted, a speech that contributed much to the overwhelming victory achieved by the Government on the 29th June, 1914. And knowing Sir James Whitney's views intimately on this subject as I do, I have no manner of doubt that if he were living to-day he would be taking some such action as we are taking. Circumstances have arisen that no one contemplated in 1914, and our duty is to act under the circumstances, the very abnormal circumstances that have arisen, no matter what our views in the past may have been. But the policy we are pursuing is in line with and the logical outcome of the policy pursued by the late Government. A decade, yes twice that period, might not have seen such advance in temperance sentiment in this Province and in this Dominion as the war has caused in the last nineteen months.

### Give Prohibition a Trial

The question of prohibition and all the evil effects of alcohol has been a burning one for many years in this country. We have tried the license system; we have tried restriction; and every person agrees to-day that the situation is not entirely satisfactory, having regard to the conditions that now exist. Therefore, <sup>in that</sup> I say to the prohibitionist and to the anti-prohibitionist, to the man who believes in this legislation and to <sup>the</sup> man who is dissatisfied with it is this: We have tried the license system for many years in this country, let us try prohibition. Let us abstain from intoxicating liquors for two or three years at least, while we have a life or death struggle on, when our very existence as a nation is at stake. At the end of that time when the war is over, when the people have had a trial of the Act and know its benefits and its weaknesses, when the people have had time for sober second-thought (if they are hysterical on this subject at the present time) and above all, when our boys have come back from the front covered with glory and honour and laurels won on the bloody battlefields of France, Flanders and Germany in maintaining for us the priceless gem of liberty and freedom, if they feel that it is in the best interest of this Province to repeal this legislation and return to the present system or some other license system, then we all must and will bow to the judgment and wish of the people in this great democratic country. The people then will be enabled to pass a more intelligent verdict upon this question than they could at any other time.

### A Nation-Wide Movement

Let us remember that there is an onward and irresistible sweep of temperance in Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

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We have British Columbia--looked upon as perhaps the strongest anti-prohibitionist Province in Canada--submitting a referendum; and I am informed in all probability that prohibition will carry.

Saskatchewan has the Government dispensary system only. This system I am told will be wiped out completely by the end of the year.

Alberta and Manitoba are both going dry at an early date by the expressed will of the people.

Nova Scotia has gone dry by a vote of 28 to 3 in the Legislature.

New Brunswick is submitting a referendum.

Prince Edward Island has been dry for years.

In Quebec out of 1,143 municipalities over 900 are dry.

Our liquor laws in Ontario, it is true, are far in advance of those of other Provinces in the past, but the call is as insistent here as elsewhere for a forward move. The wave is not even confined to Canada or to the warring countries. It is apparently growing across the line in the United States as well. On the 1st January, 1916, 6,800 barrooms were closed and seven states went dry. These States were: Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Oregon, South Carolina and Washington. The total population of these seven States is 8,253,993, a larger population than the whole of Canada.

### Cannot Evade Question

It is said that in France only absinthe, which is poison, and more injurious than any liquor commonly used here, was forbidden to be sold. That argument would appear to go only to the question of degree, but it is manifest the authorities there feel that more has to be done. M. Ribot, speaking in the Chamber of Deputies, February, 1915, said: "If the Chamber stops at the suppression

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"of absinthe only it will not have gone far enough. "There must be a reform of the whole legislation on "alcoholic liquors. This question will be forced on all "governments consequent on the enormous evils flowing "from alcohol."

It has been said quite truly that the prohibition of vodka in Russia is in an entirely different situation to the prohibition of all intoxicating liquors in this country, vodka, like absinthe, being a more harmful and a more poisonous article than any liquor ordinarily consumed here, and in addition to this being manufactured and sold by the government. But I doubt, having regard to all the facts, the practices, character and habits of the people in Russia, if the Bill we propose is as drastic as the step taken by the Russian government which has undoubtedly to such a great extent strengthened that nation and enabled her to play the heroic part she is playing in the present contest.

**Great Britain an Object Lesson**

Some honourable gentlemen point to England, in this as in other matters, as an example to follow. And we are glad to look to England for example in many things. To my mind Great Britain to-day gives the greatest object lesson we possibly could have and shows us the course in this matter, that we as a young country should shun. Through centuries of liquor traffic, during which immense businesses have been built up in the distilling and brewing of liquor for home trade as well as a lucrative export traffic, and during which the custom and habit of using intoxicants as a beverage has become almost a part of the life of the people, the trade has become so confirmed and entrenched and the sentiment of the people so firmly set, that notwithstanding the admission of the Govern-

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ment that in this hour of the nation's peril, that strong drink is a greater enemy than the Hun, that efficiency demands prohibition, they are only able to take partial measures, by reason of the anti-prohibition habits and sentiments of the people.

Surely we, as a country in the making must so shape our legislat. , and educate our people that no Government here will have to make the admission the Government of Great Britain has had to make, and be like that Government impotent to remove the evil. If it should ever happen in years to come, when Canada has a population, as she is destined to have, as large as Great Britain, when she perhaps has become the centre of wealth and influence of the British Empire and is threatened with some foe from without as England is to-day, and her statesmen have to admit, as England's have on the present occasion, that great as the danger was from the enemy without that we had a greater danger from within, from something we had licensed, tolerated and cultivated, it will stand as a reproach to us and to this generation, and public men of the future will curse us for our cowardice and faint-heartedness. (Hear, hear.)

**Warning from the Old Land**

The situation in the old land to-day speaks to us in tones of thunder to avoid the path that land has taken, and to shake off that which hampers progress in times of peace and may destroy entirely in times of war. (Applause.)

We all know the great difference in the habits and sentiments on this question between the people of the old country and the people of this country. We know the strength that the liquor trade in all its branches has built up in that country through centuries. We know the

settled customs and habits of the people of the old land on this question. But notwithstanding these adverse factors very strong measures have been taken to enforce non-treating, to limit the hours of sale, and otherwise curtail the drink traffic. Yet in the face of what has been done, leaders like Lloyd George feel how much the drink traffic is still handicapping them in the great struggle, and I am sure no honourable gentleman in this House, and I do not believe any honourable gentleman in this country would for one minute suggest that if public sentiment in favour of prohibition was as strong in Great Britain as it is in Canada, that the British Government would not long ago have enacted as far-reaching a prohibitory measure as the Bill now before this House. In other words, the British Government recognizes to the full the necessity for action from the standpoint of economy and efficiency, and the only thing that prevents further and more drastic action by that Government is the want of a public opinion sufficiently strong to warrant such legislation.

### In Freedom's Cause

Is it asking too much? Is the sacrifice too great, for Canadians, and particularly for citizens of this loyal Province of Ontario, whose hearts are as true to the old flag and whose loyalty and patriotism are as great as that in any section of our far-flung Empire, to abstain at this time, when not only that Empire but freedom itself is at stake, from the reckless waste of money that is now incurred for intoxicants, and that could be so well used for the purchase of munitions, for the aid of the wounded, and for other purposes in connection with the cause for which we are now fighting? (Applause.)

The need of thrift and economy is being urged on every hand and in every warring country. A short time ago

the Dominion Government announced that it had decided to carry on a vigorous propaganda for economy. The Government said it would advocate that the strongest possible efforts be put forth to increase production this year and promote thrift and economy among the people for the purpose of saving to assist in financing the war.

The other day we noticed in the press a strong appeal from the National War Savings Committee of Great Britain for economy, particularly condemning extravagance in women's dress, condemning the purchase of new clothes unless imperative, and condemning luxuries of all kinds.

### The Call for Thrift

In order to insure economy and thrift, very many articles that we would look upon as necessities have been forbidden altogether from being imported into Great Britain. I could go on and quote almost to no end the statements of the public men and military men of Great Britain, including the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, Lord Kitchener, and others, pointing out the absolute necessity for thrift and economy if we would win this war. Especially has the necessity been emphasized by these public men of curtailing the terrible waste in connection with strong drink. But let me quote from one of the leading papers of the old land, the *London Spectator*:

"We must economize, and the only great national "economy open to us is to cut off root and branch our "expenditure on intoxicants. If we do not, our waste of "the non-necessity of alcohol will undo us even more surely "than the force and brand of Germany and Austria. If "we mean to win the war we must prohibit the use of in- "toxicants in order to save money and get more munitions."

We know the splendid organization of Germany; we know to what a great extent they have eliminated waste

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and extravagance in every line. If we as a people do not limit waste and extravagance to a greater extent than we have, we will, to say the least, seriously handicap ourselves in a gigantic fight of the character in which we are now engaged, when money, and what money will buy—munitions and war materials of all kinds—are as essential to success as men themselves.

When we as public men are preaching economy to the people and urging our boys to enlist and risk their lives in this great war, surely it would be the height of inconsistency on our part if we did not refrain from a luxury that costs the people of Canada one hundred million or one hundred and twenty-five million dollars a year, and if we did not place upon the statute book every measure that will assist in enforcing the saving of this amount or as much of it as possible. (Hear, hear.)

Surely those of us who are too old or too infirm or not courageous enough to enlist for the present contest should at least give up the pleasure of our beer and our whiskey, give up even what we may consider our personal liberties and personal rights, so that we can save every dollar and conserve every ounce of energy for a cause in which our sons, our brothers and the best men of our land are freely shedding their blood.

### Luxuries Versus Munitions

Let me quote you just a few words from Lord Kitchener, and these words are as true of Ontario as they are of England, and are just as applicable to us as they are to Englishmen: "We cannot produce all our ordinary "peace-time requirements. Either the population must go "short of many things or the Army must go short of munitions and other indispensable things. Are civilians prepared to let brothers in the trenches endure hardships

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"while they are not ready to make small sacrifices of harder work, increased effort and increased economy?" And Lord Kitchener in this address went on to particularly appeal for economy in intoxicating liquors, tea, tobacco, coffee, etc.

Professor Cudmore, of the Economics Department of the University of Toronto, in an address before the Royal Canadian Institute, a short time ago, said:

"All the bars should be closed during the war, purely from an economic standpoint, leaving the moral issues entirely out of the question. The enormous sums spent through this channel and for all other luxuries should be curtailed while the war lasts, from the standpoint of economy solely." Prof. Cudmore advocated such a move as a temporary measure, for the purpose of husbanding money during the Empire's crisis.

It cannot be denied that many individuals and corporations and a number of lines of trade will be disturbed by this Bill and that readjustment will be required, but I am convinced that the net economic result from this Bill will be a vast gain to the community.

There will be some dislocation of trade, and many cases of hardship through parties interested in the trade, that I wish with all my heart could be avoided; but ultimately, and that in the near future, I believe the capital and labor used will be turned to more productive service, where that capital will bring substantial and permanent returns to the men who own it, where it will give employment to thousands more men and women than it does to-day and where instead of waste, and worse still, sorrow and suffering, it will bring comfort and happiness to the individual and strength and stability to the state. We regret the loss and suffering it may entail, but the public good must be supreme.

Will any man pretend that if we can reduce even to a substantial extent the annual expenditure in this Province for strong drink we will not have accomplished much towards the conservation of our financial strength and resources and immensely added to our ability to do our

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part, and our full part, in the present great struggle  
(Applause.)

The cost to consumers of strong drink in Ontario has been estimated at \$30,000,000.00 to \$40,000,000.00 annually. If by our legislation we do no more than cut this bill in half we have saved from expenditure in luxury a sum equal to ten times the amount raised and disbursed by this Province, with no small source of satisfaction and pride to all of us, for war purposes.

### **Saving in More Than Money**

But when we charge up the amount of money actually expended for strong drink, we are by no means at the end of the bill chargeable to the traffic. For while much of the money spent in the traffic may harm to a slight degree, if at all, those making such expenditure, we all must recognize it is undoubtedly the cause of a serious loss in the working and earning power of our people, a cause—and a very substantial cause—of inefficiency in men in every walk of life. This is emphasized by the ever increasing number of employers of labour who demand not only sobriety, but in many cases, total abstinence on the part of their employees. We have not only loss in money, loss in production, loss in efficiency by those who indulge in strong drink, but we have loss of labour as well.

Bartenders, brewery workers, cigar-makers, etc., say you will deprive us of our work by the passage of this Bill. It is a serious thing to interfere with any industry, and more serious still to interfere with the means by which a workman earns his livelihood. But what are the facts to-day? Recruiting sergeants are pleading on every street corner for recruits for our overseas contingents, and leading men allege that it will be impossible to reach our quota of the half a million men already promised

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by this country. Urgent requests come from all sections for further organization in order to secure the necessary number of men for enlistment. Our agriculturists are calling, and calling in vain, for men to till the ground, sow the seed, and reap the harvest so essential not only to the prosperity of this country, but to the success of Great Britain and her Allies. Our munition factories and factories of almost every kind are crying for help and more help. Our banks, our trust companies and other institutions are calling for men to take the place of those going to the front or who ought to go to the front. Never in the history of this country were there so many avenues open for the workers of all classes and conditions to find employment as there are to-day. Never was there such necessity for every citizen being employed at some constructive and productive work as there is to-day. Never was there a time when there could be such a readjustment as the proposed Act may entail with so little loss, so little suffering to the men employed in the trade. And under the conditions I have named might we not well ask why should hundreds and thousands of men be employed in providing and administering a luxury, to put the case as mildly as possible. The call comes to-day in this Province and throughout the Empire with greater insistence than ever for men and more men, not only for the battlefield, but for productive work that is as essential for the winning of this war. (Applause.)

**Plain Duty for All**

The soil of France and Flanders is red to-day with the blood of Canada's best and bravest. The flower of our young manhood is marching out daily in thousands. How long can this fair young Province stand the strain? Before the 500,000 men from Canada that we have pro-

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mised have been secured, at the present ratio of recruiting Ontario will be depleted of the very pick of her citizenship; and it will take us generations to make good in man-power what this war is costing us. In the name of high Heaven then what is the duty of this House and this country? Surely it is to bend every energy, to use every effort, to enact every law that we believe will bring to an end, and that as soon as possible, the terrible war tragedy now being enacted. (Applause.)

Is this a time to talk of personal liberty, to think of our pleasures, our appetites, our enjoyments, when the civilization of the world is hanging in the balance and the very foundations of liberty are tottering and dependent upon the strength of Great Britain and her Allies in the field and on the high seas?

Are we who are staying at home comfortable and safe around our firesides going to cavil about our rights, our privileges and our pleasures while the stream of our richest and best life's blood continues to flow unstaunch'd for the cause of liberty? (Hear, hear.)

I may be wrong in the judgment I have formed. The Bill before the House may not accomplish what I hope for it, but I would a thousand times sooner be guilty of an error of judgment in taking an action of this kind with the object of conserving our strength and mobilizing our resources so that this war may be brought to an end and the life of our young manhood saved, as far as possible, and the grief and suffering and woe minimized to the greatest extent we can, than to sit with folded arms apparently free from criticism and censure. (Applause.)

### The King Leads

Let me repeat the language of His Gracious Majesty, our beloved King, when he said, "I rejoice in my Empire's efforts. I feel pride in the voluntary response from my

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"subjects all over the world who have sacrificed home and "fortune and life itself, in order that another may not "inherit the free Empire which their ancestors and mine "have built. I ask you to make good these sacrifices." (Applause.)

It is in that spirit I ask the Members of this House, the people of this Province, yes the men engaged in the trade itself, who will suffer financial loss, but who are as patriotic and loyal as anybody, let the cost be what it may, to make good the sacrifice. (Applause.) I appeal with the greater earnestness of soul that I have ever appealed to this House or to any body of men before for a united support of this measure. Let us pass this measure without opposition, without division. (Cheers.) **Let us show an example to the Empire and the world of how the men in this Province far off from the seat of war, are willing to rise above party and prejudice, are willing to sacrifice personal pleasure and habits, are willing to forfeit business interests and investments; are willing to sink if need be into political oblivion, if by so doing they can the better play their part in the greatest war of the ages; if by so doing they can the sooner bring to an end the bloodshed, sorrow and suffering being caused by this war.** (Loud cheers.)

**One Object**

Whatever your views may be, I am confident of this fact that your hearts beat in unison with mine in the object I have in view, and my hope is that we all may be given wisdom and understanding to discharge our duty aright at the time of this great crisis in the world's history.

Prior to the outbreak of war public sentiment in Russia, in France and in England would not only not have justified,

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but would not have permitted any drastic temperance legislation. The war changed all that, and far-reaching measures were enacted by the governments in Russia and France and were overwhelmingly supported by the people. Somewhat drastic steps, too, were taken in England and endorsed by the people in a way that they would not have been but for the war. It is said that many evils such as drinking by women increased during the war because England had not taken more drastic steps than she did.

But I want to ask this House if the people of Ontario and the people of Canada are going to be less anxious to play their part in this war, less sincere, less consecrated, less ready for sacrifice, so that the end may be obtained, than France, and England, or than any of the warring nations of the world. I do not believe so, but on the contrary I am confident that there is no section of the vast Empire over which the Union Jack floats, that there is not one of the allied countries, no matter to what flag it gives allegiance, where people are more anxious to do their duty in this great contest of the ages and are more ready and willing to suffer and sacrifice than the people of this splendid Province of Ontario. (Applause.)

It is admitted on all hands that legislation to be effective must have behind it a sound and enlightened public opinion. The legislation placed on our statute books from time to time reflects the sentiments and views of the people, and is no better and no worse than the thought and opinion of the people whose minds it reflects.

### What is Personal Liberty?

The strong argument used against sumptuary legislation of this kind, and the popular one is that it restricts a man's personal liberty to do as he pleases as a free citizen. Men object to being told what they may eat, and what

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they may drink. But no man in this House or out of it would for one moment suggest that the liquor traffic should not be regulated and restricted, to some degree. If it is to be regulated and restricted at all, who is to determine to what extent regulation and restriction are to be carried. The answer in a democratic country like this is that it is the people and the people alone, either speaking through the ballot as they do in a referendum, or speaking through the members elected by them to the Legislature.

The blessings of freedom and civilization, the advantages of health and sanitation necessitate the surrender by each citizen of certain of his so-called rights and liberties. Smallpox breaks out. I must be vaccinated whether or not I believe in vaccination; and no matter how much I may object to the infringement of my liberty, the law says I must submit to it for the general good. My servant is stricken with scarlet fever, my house is quarantined and no one is permitted to enter or leave except as the Medical Officer of Health directs. The Health Officer condemns the city water, and I may only use it if it is dosed with chlorine. I abominate chlorine. I am willing to take all chances of drinking raw water, but the law says "No." For the sake of the public and for fear of a pestilence breaking out, I must slake my thirst on water doctored by the Health Officer and in no other way. (Laughter).

**The People Make the Law**

In other words it is well recognized that in order to enjoy the benefits of civilization, the law must have power to determine what I may eat and drink and do and the people make the law.

It then necessarily follows that if I believe in democratic government, government by the people for

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the people, that when the people say I must not drink whisky I must surrender my right to do so, just as I must submit to be vaccinated when the law ordains that I should, and refrain from drinking untreated water, when the Board of Health says I must. In a democratic country my rights and privileges, and your rights and privileges, depend on the will of the people. The state exists for the good of the people.

I recognize the necessity of public opinion to enforce a prohibitory law. Everyone, however, now admits that there is an immense wave of public opinion in favour of prohibition. Temperance workers, those engaged in the liquor trade, and those opposed to prohibition all agree as to this. Some say it is simply a wave that will recede; that it is hysterical and fanatical. Be that as it may, none will deny that there is greater earnestness to-day on the part of our people on this subject and on other moral subjects than ever before. There never has come to us such a call before to live sober, thoughtful and sacrificing lives. There has never been such a call to us to forget self and act for the general good of humanity. In fact, we are going through the most tragic days the world has ever seen, when the foundations of civilization and liberty are shaken and when we as a people are being tested to the very basis of our national life.

### Prohibition Can Be Enforced

I believe a prohibitory law by the common consent of the people can be enforced to-day and will be observed as it never was before in this or in any other country in the world. (Applause.)

You say the wave in favour of temperance will ebb. It possibly may. Very well then; when the war is over and the necessity for thrift and economy is not so great,

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if the people by their free vote want to undo what we have to-day done they will be given a full opportunity so to do. In a country with free institutions such as we enjoy, the will of the people must in this as in everything else be supreme. In a democratic country we must all bow to the sovereign will of the people.

There are many questions arising directly or indirectly out of the Bill that demand the attention of the Government. But I have only time to mention, and that in the briefest possible way, one or two. Before touching on these, however, I want to say just this. The Bill as printed has undoubtedly, many imperfections. Some of these will be cured in Committee. Others can only be properly cured when we have had a trial of the Act. We will have had a few months trial of the Act before next session, and we will then have the knowledge that can only be gained by experience to assist us in making it as perfect as possible.

**Assist Inebriates**

A very important matter, bearing on the general question, has been pressed upon the attention of the Government by the able and energetic representative for South-east Toronto (Mr. Hook), viz., the proper treatment of inebriates, particularly the poor fellow who has not the means of securing treatment in private institutions. We are trying to remove temptation as far as possible from men of this class, but I recognize this is not enough. We must do something to cure the disease, and remove the craving for strong drink, or he will get liquor or a substitute for liquor in some way.

Dr. Gilmour deals very forcibly with this very question in the address I have already referred to:

Alcohol was the most potent factor in the production of crime that the country has. He regarded the present method of dealing

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with inebriates as burlesque. He believed it put a premium on drunkenness. A man was locked up for a short period for prolation and then let out with a "Sahara" thirst, only to return to jail after a debauch. "The treatment of inebriety depends largely upon whether you are poor or wealthy. If a poor man gets drunk he is sent to the police station, the other fellow is taken home in a limousine and put to bed."

Legislation will be introduced later this session dealing to some extent with this important question, and full study will be given as to the best policy to pursue between now and next session.

### **Hotel Accommodation**

The question of hotel accommodation, when this Bill comes into force, is also an important and a very important one. It has been particularly pressed upon us by commercial travellers. It is having the consideration of the Government, and some legislation on the subject will, I hope, be before the House in a few days. I have not time to speak in detail on the matter now. I simply want to repeat and emphasize to the temperance people of the Province generally, what I said to the Committee of One Hundred, that their work has only commenced,—that the task of seeing that hotel accommodation and social gathering places are provided in the different communities is a work that particularly devolves upon them. If they do not take hold of the matter in a business-like way and do their best to solve it, they will be false to the cause they have espoused, bringing discredit upon themselves and this legislation. (Hear, hear.)

The deputation from the Commercial Travellers Association that waited upon the Government the other day, although not opposing this legislation, some at all events expressing their personal view in favor of it, all saying that they had no desire to have the sale of liquor connected with hotels, urged as a means of insuring them

suitable hotel accommodation that a clause be inserted in the Bill holding those signing the petition lately presented to the Government, legally responsible for providing adequate accommodation for the public. This, of course, would not be practicable, but it shows the responsibility that a most important body in our community places upon temperance advocates.

### Problem Can Be Solved

The Government will do its duty in the matter, but the people interested must do theirs. The commercial travellers admitted that in many local option districts hotel accommodation was better than it had been under license, and better than in many licensed places, so the problem presents no insuperable difficulties. Renfrew, Ingersoll, and many other places have barless hotels equal to the best in the country and yielding a profit to the owners. What these have done other places can do, and do all the easier now when all the hotels in the Province are on the same basis.

### The Right Course

Just a word in conclusion. Some men as honest and as sincere as I am have said that this measure will not make for temperance or the real welfare of the Province. Some have said that by this measure I have sealed the political doom of my Government and signed my death warrant as a public man. My answer to such is that I would ten thousand times rather go down to political oblivion and disappear forever from view as a public man than to fail in what I believe to be my duty at the present time. (Applause.) **The man who chooses the path of**

**political expediency as against the path of duty is not worthy of the support of the splendid body of men that sit to the right of the Speaker in this House, or of the great body of citizens that belong to the grand old Conservative Party, and above all is not worthy to stand in the shoes of the great Whitney who was ever bold enough to be honest and honest enough to be bold. (Loud applause.)**

In this day of national peril, in this day when the future of the British Empire, the freedom of the world, and the blessings of democratic government hang in the balance, if I should fail to listen to what I believe to be the call of duty, **if I should neglect to take every action that in my judgment will help to conserve the financial strength and power and manhood of this Province for the great struggle in which we are engaged, I would be a traitor to my country, a traitor to my own conscience and unworthy of the brave sons of Canada that are fighting, bleeding and dying for freedom and for us.** (Loud applause.)

Since I have been honoured with the leadership of this House and of the great Conservative Party in this Province I have earnestly struggled to keep an undimmed eye on the goal of what was best for this Province and its people, and I trust that so long as I may be honoured with such leadership I may be able to keep a clear and unclouded eye upon that goal and to follow the path of duty as I see it with feeble, perhaps, but nevertheless with unfaltering step and with unwavering determination.

Personally it matters little to me whether my career as Prime Minister of this Province is long or short, but it does matter much that I discharge my duty to the best of my ability while I retain that high position. It matters much to this Province that its Prime Minister, whoever he may be, should be guided, and guided solely by a sense of duty. (Hear, hear.) And while I am not

unconscious of the fact that many of my best and warmest personal and political friends feel that I have made a mistake, even some may feel that they cannot continue further to give their allegiance to the Party while I am its leader, if such should be the case I regret it very much. I have, personally, however, faith without a doubt that not only the public of to-day, but the public of to-morrow, and the public of years to come, will say that the Government did what was right under conditions as they existed at the time. I fear not the verdict of this day or of future generations; I am content to await, and will await with confidence, the verdict of the people when the right time comes for them to render their verdict—and I am satisfied that the Conservative, who in years to come reads the record of his party we are writing to-day, will have no cause to blush as he reads that record. (Applause.)

And whatever comes, approval or condemnation, I will always have the witness of a clear conscience that in the hour of my country's greatest peril I hesitated not to do what to me seemed right, and waited not to count the cost. (Applause and cheers.)